

Rule 711. Representation by Supervised Law Students or Law School Graduates

(a) Eligibility.

(1) A student enrolled in a law school approved by the American Bar Association may be eligible to receive a temporary law license to perform the services described in paragraph (c) of this rule, if the student:

(i) Has received credit for work representing at least one-half of the total hourly credits required for graduation from the law school.

(ii) Is in good academic standing and be eligible under the school's criteria to undertake the activities authorized herein.

(2) A graduate of a law school approved by the American Bar Association may be eligible to receive a temporary law license, or to retain a temporary law license issued prior to graduation, to perform the services described in paragraph (c) of this rule, if the graduate:

(i) has not yet had an opportunity to take the first Illinois bar examination administered by the Illinois Board of Admissions to the Bar (IBAB) following the student's graduation from law school or, in lieu of the Illinois bar examination, has not yet had an opportunity to take the first administration of the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) in another jurisdiction or the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE),

(ii) has taken the first administration of the UBE in Illinois or in another jurisdiction following the student's graduation from law school and failed to attain a passing score as required by IBAB, but has not yet had an opportunity to take the second administration of the UBE in Illinois or in another jurisdiction following the student's graduation from law school, or the MPRE,

(iii) has taken the examinations but not yet received notification of the results of either examination, or

(iv) has taken and passed both examinations or, in lieu of the Illinois bar examination has attained a passing score on the UBE in another jurisdiction that is eligible to be transferred for admission under Supreme Court Rule 704A, but has not yet been sworn as a member of the Illinois bar.

A law graduate who has been denied admission to the bar in Illinois or another jurisdiction on a ground related to character and fitness, or as to whom hearings are pending in Illinois or another jurisdiction on a ground related to character and fitness, is not eligible for a temporary law license. For purposes of this rule, a law school graduate is defined as any individual not yet licensed to practice law in any jurisdiction.

(b) Entities Through Which Services Must Be Performed. The services authorized by this rule may only be performed in the course of the student's or graduate's paid or unpaid work with one or more of the following entities, including a private firm contracted to perform the services of an entity listed in (1)-(4) below provided that services performed under this Rule are limited to the contract:

(1) a legal aid bureau, legal assistance program, organization, or clinic chartered by the State of Illinois or approved by a law school approved by the American Bar Association;

- (2) the office of the public defender;
- (3) an office, agency, or department of the State or any of its subdivisions;
- (4) an office, agency, or department of the United States or any of its subdivisions; or

(5) for law graduates only, during the period January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2029, a private law firm with a practice in the 1st, 13th, 15th, or 23rd Judicial Circuits, and any other judicial circuits within the state as the Supreme Court may designate from time to time, provided that services performed under this Rule are limited to these circuits.

(c) Services Permitted. Under the supervision of an active member of the bar of this State, and with the written consent of the person on whose behalf the law student or graduate is acting, a law student or graduate licensed under this Rule may render the following services:

(1) Counsel and advise clients, negotiate in the settlement of claims, represent clients in mediation and other nonlitigation matters, and engage in the preparation and drafting of legal instruments.

(2) Appear in the trial courts, courts of review and administrative tribunals of this State, including court-annexed arbitration and mediation, subject to the following qualifications:

(i) Written consent to representation of the person on whose behalf the law student or graduate is acting shall be filed in the case and brought to the attention of the judge or presiding officer.

(ii) Appearances, pleadings, motions, and other documents to be filed with the court may be prepared by the student or graduate and may be signed by him/her with the accompanying designation “Law Student” or “Law Graduate” but must also be signed by the supervising member of the bar.

(iii) In criminal cases, in which the penalty may be imprisonment, in proceedings challenging sentences of imprisonment, and in civil or criminal contempt proceedings, the student or graduate may participate in pretrial, trial, and posttrial proceedings as an assistant of the supervising member of the bar, who shall be present and responsible for the conduct of the proceedings.

(iv) In all other civil and criminal cases in the trial courts or administrative tribunals, the student or graduate may conduct all pretrial, trial, and posttrial proceedings, and the supervising member of the bar need not be present.

(v) In matters before courts of review, the law student or graduate may prepare briefs, excerpts from the record, and other documents filed in courts of review of the State, which may set forth the name of the student or graduate with the accompanying designation “Law Student” or “Law Graduate” but must be filed in the name of the supervising member of the bar. Upon motion by the supervising member of the bar, the law student or law graduate may request authorization to argue the matter before the court of review. If the law student or law graduate is permitted to argue, the supervising member of the bar must be present and responsible for the conduct of the hearing.

(3) Where permitted, appear in the trial courts, courts of review, and administrative

tribunals of the United States located in Illinois, subject to the tribunal's local rules on admission to practice by law students and law school graduates.

(d) Compensation. A student or graduate rendering services authorized by this rule shall not request or accept any compensation from the person for whom the student or graduate renders the services, but may receive compensation from an entity described in paragraph (b).

(e) Application for Licensure; Expiration and Termination of License.

(1) A law student or law school graduate who wishes to be licensed under this rule shall apply to the Administrative Director using the application form provided by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, which shall include verification by the dean of the applicant's law school and the applicant's supervising attorney. The Administrative Director shall, upon review and approval of the completed application of an eligible student or graduate, issue the temporary license. Unless otherwise provided by the Administrative Director, upon the issuance of a temporary license, the law student/graduate may render the services described in paragraph (c) of this rule for the employer identified on the application until the license expires or is terminated. No services that are permitted under paragraph (c) shall be performed prior to the issuance of a temporary license. A law student or graduate licensed under this rule must notify the Administrative Director in advance, using the form provided by the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, of any changes in the student's or graduate's employer or supervising attorney.

(2) Unless otherwise provided by the Administrative Director for good cause shown, or unless sooner withdrawn or terminated, a temporary law license issued pursuant to this Rule shall remain in effect until the expiration of 30 months after it is issued, or until the second Illinois bar admission ceremony following the student's graduation, whichever is earlier.

(3) The certification of eligibility made by the dean of the student's or graduate's law school may be withdrawn by the dean at any time, without prior notice, hearing, or showing of cause, by the mailing of a notice to that effect to the Administrative Director and copies of the notice to the student/graduate and to the student's/graduate's supervising attorney.

(4) A temporary law license issued pursuant to this Rule may be terminated by this court at any time without prior notice, hearing, or showing of cause. Notice of the termination may be filed with the Administrative Director, who shall notify the student and the entities to which the student had been assigned.

Amended effective May 27, 1969; amended July 1, 1985, effective August 1, 1985; amended July 3, 1986, effective August 1, 1986; amended June 19, 1989, effective August 1, 1989; amended June 12, 1992, effective July 1, 1992; amended October 10, 2001, effective immediately; amended December 5, 2003, effective immediately; amended February 10, 2006, effective immediately; amended June 18, 2013, eff. July 1, 2013; amended June 8, 2016, eff. immediately; amended June 22, 2017, eff. July 1, 2017; amended Aug. 25, 2022, eff. immediately; amended Apr. 19, 2023, eff. immediately; amended Apr. 14, 2026, eff. Jan. 1, 2027.

Committee Comments

(April 14, 2026)

This rule was amended effective January 1, 2027, to help address unmet legal needs, particularly in rural communities, by extending the length of time a law graduate may qualify for a 711 license following graduation from law school by allowing a law graduate who does not pass the first bar examination administered following graduation to retain his or her 711 license through the next administered bar examination. The amendments also allow a law graduate to sit for either the Illinois bar examination or the Uniform Bar Examination in another jurisdiction. On a pilot basis, the amendment also expands 711 licenses to law graduates affiliated with a private firm and practicing in the 1st, 13th, 15th, or 23rd Judicial Circuits.

(June 18, 2013)

This rule was amended effective July 1, 2013, to clarify that students and law graduates may perform nonlitigation legal services under this rule. Nothing in this rule should be construed to require law students or law graduates to be certified under this rule for work, including but not limited to transactional, pretrial, and policy work, that properly may be performed by a law student or other nonlawyer under Rule 5.3 of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct.

(July 1, 1985)

This rule was amended, effective August 1, 1985, to allow the Administrative Director of the Illinois Courts to allow certain graduates of approved law schools to perform services under this rule pending their first opportunity to sit for the bar examination and to allow the Administrative Director, upon good cause shown, to extend the termination date of a certificate beyond the period prescribed by the rule. “Good cause shown” would ordinarily be limited to evidence that the licensee was unable to sit for the first bar examination offered following his graduation because of illness, a death in his family, military obligation, etc.